

When the (Demo) Dog Bites by ohmybgosh

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: M/M, Prompt Fic, more fluff cause that's all i ever do, steve has nightmares trope

Language: English

Characters: Billy Hargrove, Steve Harrington

Relationships: Billy Hargrove/Steve Harrington

Status: Completed

Published: 2017-11-12

Updated: 2017-11-12

Packaged: 2022-04-02 14:48:13

Rating: Teen And Up Audiences

Warnings: Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

Chapters: 1

Words: 3,025

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

These are a few of Steve's favorite things.

When the (Demo) Dog Bites

Author's Note:

Prompt from tumblr: "So i have a idea for harringrove prompt one shot. Steve is having nightmares because of demogorgons and he's waking up in the middle of the night with a scream. One day billy is with him and he is taking care of him after the nightmare? I don't know, but I really thing that it would be really cute!"

Here you go!! Thank you guys for all your kind words! You can always shoot an idea by me on my tumblr, I'm a little slow at responding but always down to fill a prompt <3

Steve Harrington had never had nightmares as a kid. He had bad dreams, sure, where he'd wake up with the bed wet, where he'd totter off to his parents room to crawl underneath the covers and worm his way between them, only to have his mother scold him the next day for wetting his own bed again. But that was years ago, when Steve still had dinosaur sheets and picture books on his bookshelf.

Now, though, now he had nightmares. Real nightmares, the kind where he'd wake up in a cold sweat, his heart racing, his limbs sometimes too paralyzed with fear to move. He was too old to sneak to his parents room, had decided he was too old ten years ago, and they were rarely involved in his life to notice, anyway. With Nancy it had been better; it had been wonderful, actually. She understood without asking why he woke up shaking. And she always held him until he fell back asleep.

But now he was alone - and the nightmares seemed to be getting worse.

Well, sort of alone. There was Billy Hargrove.

Billy. Steve didn't know what to say about Billy. After that night - when he beat the shit out of Steve, when Steve went from normal

average broken-hearted high school senior to full on demon slaying babysitter - things had been different. Billy, true to his word, was leaving Max and the others alone. He'd gone as far as apologizing to Steve, to Lucas, even. He still beat Steve mercilessly in basketball, though, and loved to point it out, and he still gave Steve that weird once over in the showers afterward, with the toothy grin like a shark, his tongue darting out over his lips. Steve pointedly tried to ignore him.

But then Billy made it damn near impossible to ignore him, finally totally impossible when he kissed Steve one night, drunk, outside some senior's party. And Steve had surprised himself by kissing Billy back. And things had sort of just happened after that.

So now there was Billy Hargrove. Sometimes. Randomly. Speeding in and out of Steve's life on his own whim. Steve didn't mind; this thing they had was new. And he wasn't even really sure what kind of thing it was, whether or not it would continue. But it was nice. He didn't really have to think about it; nobody knew about it so he didn't really have to talk about it, either. It felt good, to be honest, to keep a secret that was all his own.

One particular night in December, Steve lay awake in his bed, staring up at the ceiling. He didn't want to sleep. The nightmares had gotten worse, and the last three nights had left him waking up shaking, sweating.

He'd been ignoring Billy because of this.

Billy liked to sleep over after sex; he was, surprisingly, an avid cuddler, worming his way into Steve's arms. Billy, Steve discovered, had a talent for falling asleep in a matter of minutes. And when Billy slept he fucking *slept*. He was dead weight; his limbs spread out haphazardly and he stole all the blankets. He snored, loudly, and sometimes drooled on the pillow.

Steve didn't complain though. He liked stuffing his icy hands and feet behind Billy's knees and under his armpits, and it was nice, to have a warm body beside him. And if he was being honest with himself he found Billy's habits kind of endearing.

But this particular night he didn't want Billy over. Had slipped out of school before Billy, had avoided their usual hangouts, had waved off the phone call his mother tried to pass along to him after dinner.

Steve glanced at his alarm clock. It was one in the morning and he had to be up at six and he hadn't even closed his eyes yet. He rolled over, punched his pillow into place. He didn't want to close his eyes; he was afraid to.

A small thunk from outside made Steve sit bolt up in bed, the covers falling into his lap. His heart hammered in his chest. There was another *plunk* . Steve felt sweat trickling down his forehead.

It was coming from outside, from down there. Down by the pool. The pool.

Steve swallowed.

Plunk. Steve flinched. *Plunk* .

This time he saw what it was. A small stone hit his window and fell back down out of sight. Steve's brow furrowed.

PLUNK. A much bigger rock, about the size of Steve's fist, smacked into the window. He thought he heard a crack and he winced.

Steve stood, wrapped his arms around his stomach, and crept to the window. Heart still in his throat, he glanced down.

Billy stood some feet away from Steve's window, at the edge of the pool, looking up, his arm pulled back and his fist clenched around another large rock.

Panicking, imagining a rock sized hole in the glass that would be very hard to explain to his parents, Steve threw the window open.

"What the fuck?" he hissed, pressing his nose against the screen.

Billy lowered his arm. "Harrington."

"What the *fuck* ?"

“Can you come unlock the door? Freezing my ass off down here.”

Steve sighed deeply, closing the window. For a second, he entertained the idea of crawling back into bed and leaving Billy to fend for himself, but his stomach was already fluttering in that stupid way it did when Billy was around, and the fact that Billy had showed up, lobbing rocks at Steve’s window in the wee hours of the morning, after Steve had pointedly ignored him all day, was kind of amazing.

He tiptoed down the stairs, carefully avoiding the creaky step, and across the foyer to the front door, unlocking the deadbolt and pulling the door open. Billy stood on the front step, hands in his pockets, wiping his boots on the welcome mat.

He slid passed Steve and Steve shut the door, locking it again.

He looked over at Billy.

“Nice jammies,” Billy whispered.

Steve glanced down, blushing. He sort of forgot he had worn his striped Long John’s to bed.

“Thanks,” he mumbled.

There was an awkward silence, where Billy just stared at him, his lips pulled tight in a thin line.

After a moment, Steve avoided his eyes and headed to the stairs, glancing back once. Billy slipped his shoes off, carrying them with him, and followed.

Once upstairs, in the safety of Steve’s room with the bedroom door shut tight, Steve crawled into bed, pulling the covers up. He scooted to one side and glanced up at Billy, patted the space next to him. Billy narrowed his eyes. He crossed his arms over his chest.

“You’re ignoring me.” His voice had a dangerous edge to it, that sharp spark of anger that fizzled just below the surface. Steve used to flinch, before all of this had started. Before Billy had bashed his face in, before Billy had started to change. He didn’t flinch anymore, but he sometimes tensed up, bracing himself for shouting.

“Sorry.” Steve didn’t deny it, didn’t like lying; he felt he had to do a lot of it on a daily basis. So lying to Billy felt wrong, because this thing with Billy was confusing as hell but Steve still had control over it, and he didn’t want to complicate things even more.

Billy made a “tch” sound. “Is that it?”

Steve sighed heavily. He felt so tired all of a sudden, physically and emotionally exhausted. “Yes, that’s it. I’m sorry.”

“You want me to go?” Billy asked after a moment. The anger had faded from his eyes, his voice, the set of his jaw and his tensed shoulders, something else replacing it; the light from the sky outside was low but in the bits that hit Billy’s face Steve could see his eyes shone, slightly wet.

“No,” he said, and then, when Billy still wouldn’t look at him, “Billy.”

Billy looked up at that; they didn’t use each other’s names that much, they were Hargrove and Harrington to the outside world, and to each other they were, well, Steve hadn’t really figured that out yet. But he used Billy’s first name in his head, growing fond of the way it felt on his tongue when he tested it out alone and aloud.

“Come over here,” Steve murmured. He patted the space next to him again. Billy debated for a moment, and Steve could tell his stubborn side and soft side were battling it out.

Billy sighed, as if in defeat but Steve knew by now that he was just being dramatic, and crossed the room stripping down to his briefs as he went. He paused at the side of Steve’s bed, quite a sight in nothing but his socks and underwear.

He looked a little uncertain. Steve reached out and took his hand, pulling him down beside him. Billy slid under the covers, lying on his back, folding his hand over his stomach, leaving a gap between himself and Steve.

“I’m sorry,” Steve breathed. He rolled over so he was facing Billy, Billy who stared up at the ceiling, examining the few glow-in-the-dark stars that were still stubbornly stuck up there, remnants of

Steve's Astrology Phase in middle school. Steve remembered the first time Billy had stayed over, and when Steve turned off the lights Billy had laughed so hard at the stupid little stars that Steve threatened to suffocate him with his pillow if he didn't keep it the fuck down.

"I called you," Billy mumbled, so quiet Steve had to hold his breath to hear.

Steve winced. That felt bad; he felt shitty, because none of this was Billy's fault, hell, Billy didn't even know what was going on.

"I know." Steve reached out, finger brushing against Billy's cheek. He didn't miss the twitch of Billy's face when he touched him, the involuntary reaction Billy always did when Steve reached for him without warning. It made Steve's whole body hurt to think about it. He had a pretty good idea as to why Billy reacted like this, and Steve was suddenly hit with a wave of guilt as he realized what the consequences of Billy sneaking out this late at night might be, and the consequences of Billy not coming home til morning, because, Steve knew, that was likely where they were headed.

His eyes suddenly hurt, like something invisible was squeezing them, and he shut them, ducking his head and willing the tears that threatened away.

"I've been having nightmares," he said quietly. He heard Billy shift and he looked up; Billy had tilted his head slightly to look at Steve. He didn't say anything though, just frowned, one brow raising.

"Yeah, shit," Steve continued, nodding as if Billy had said something. Steve plowed on, words he had not known were building inside of him coming fumbling to the surface. "I feel so stupid, because I can't sleep, and I know they're just dreams, but they feel so *real*. Sometimes I can't move when I wake up, and it's just been getting worse, and.." Steve paused, faltering. He knew he couldn't tell Billy *that* stuff, not that Billy would believe him even if he did. But it surprised Steve, in that moment, because he did want to tell Billy, wanted Billy to believe him. He tried again, editing out the things he couldn't say. "It's just - a lot happened last year, when Will Byers went missing, and Nancy's friend Barb died, and then Nancy..." He trailed off. Billy was watching him curiously, one brow still raised,

chest rising and falling slowing. Steve concentrated on that, on watching Billy breathe. "I didn't want you to know. I was embarrassed, and I just - I didn't want you to know."

Steve watched Billy nervously. A part of him was worried, worried Billy would laugh at him, would tease him.

Billy didn't say anything. He did, however scoot closer, reach over, snaking one arm around Steve and pulling him tight. He kneaded his fingers through Steve's hair, rubbing soothingly at Steve's temples.

Steve felt as though he had let something free, as though those words had been holding him down, and that by saying them aloud, letting them hang in the air of his dark bedroom, passing them along to Billy, a weight had been lifted. A small weight. There were still so many things Steve needed to say, needed to talk about but didn't have anyone to talk with about, couldn't talk about them, anyway. But his chest felt a little less heavy.

He had trouble keeping his eyes open, his exhaustion suffocating him like a wool blanket. When he jerked, legs kicking out after drifting off for a second, Billy held him tight, whispering something, something Steve couldn't hear, was too tired to hear. He felt Billy's lips brush his forehead, moving, saying something softly again, but Steve was already plunging into sleep.

Steve awoke with a start. He couldn't breathe and he panicked, his heart speeding up. He was cold, so very cold, and he felt wet, unpleasantly damp all over. It was pitch black and he couldn't move. The images flashed before his eyes, the tunnels, the horrible black vines, the slimy skin of the dogs slipping past him as he held Dustin tight, terrified the boy would be ripped from his arms. He gasped, and, *god*, he could almost taste that air, the ashy, unnatural rotten air.

Something warm moved beside him and he jerked, limbs lashing out, a sob tearing from his throat. He heard a voice and his pulse hammered in his ears.

A light flicked on and the world came startlingly into view, the sweat soaked sheets, his desk in the corner, those stupid dusty stars, and Billy, kneeling in the bed, leaning over him, eyes wide with concern, mouth moving, saying something.

It seemed like every sense was coming back to Steve, first there was taste - that air, which he realized now, fully awake, was just morning breath and the need for a glass of water - and then there was touch - the sweaty sheets and Billy sitting up beside him - and then there was sight - the lights flickering on, drowning the images of the Upsidedown with blinding clarity - and then there was smell - of the stuffy room, of Billy's skin, sweaty, and his hair that stuck up at a strange angle, sweet like shampoo - and finally there was hearing - Billy had been saying Steve's name, reaching out and shaking his shoulder.

"Steve?" he said again, looking uncertain. Steve swallowed. He rubbed his eyes, knuckles damp with tears. "Can you hear me?"

Steve's throat felt dry. He nodded.

Looking relieved, Billy lay back down, peeling the covers off, kicking them out of sight. The cool air stung, but it was refreshing, another sense pulling Steve back to reality. He could feel Billy watching him, but he still couldn't talk. He curled onto one side, facing Billy, staring at Billy's chest. He watched Billy breathe again, concentrating on each breath; he followed them with his own, willing his heart to slow.

Billy didn't touch him; he seemed to be taking everything in, carefully examining Steve, assessing the situation to see what it called for. After a moment he spoke, his voice low, ever so quiet but still shattering the silence of the room.

"My mom used to sing me that song when I had nightmares. You know, that one from that movie about that girl who's dating a Nazi and the singing nanny."

Steve, startling himself, smiled. *The Sound of Music*, he thought, and shit, what a terrible synopsis.

“Yeah, the one about raindrops on kittens,” Billy continued, and Steve’s smile widened. *Raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens* , he thought. *Brown copper kettles and warm woolen mittens.*

“I can’t remember the words.” Billy sounded a little sad, and Steve, his breath back to normal, looked up. Billy was frowning up at the ceiling. “I don’t know. She always used to sing that when I had a bad dream. She’d tell me to think about my favorite things, told me to think about those things before I fell asleep so I’d dream about them. Can’t remember what they were.”

Steve’s smile faded. He wanted to ask what Billy’s nightmares were about, but he didn’t, because that somehow felt too personal, too much to share.

“It’s stupid,” Billy laughed harshly.

“No,” Steve said hoarsely. Billy turned to him. “Not stupid.”

Billy smiled, finally reaching out to touch Steve’s cheek, and Steve inched closer, craving the affection.

“Can I do anything?” Billy asked, the “about the nightmares” unspoken but heavy in his words all the same.

“No,” Steve shook his head, then, “Actually, water. Water would be nice.”

“Course.” Billy stood, stretching, and crossed the floor, easing the bedroom door open and slipping out. With the door open, Steve could hear his dad snoring down the hall. He heard the faucet turn on in the kitchen, then off a moment later, Billy’s quiet feet on the stairs, skipping the squeaky step. His shadow appeared in the doorway a moment later. Glass in one hand, he carefully shut the door, climbing back in bed and handing the water over to Steve, who sat up and finished the whole thing in two gulps.

Sighing, he set the glass on his bedside table and lay back down, motioning for Billy to follow. Billy did, shutting the light off and retrieving the blankets on his way. He pulled them up to Steve’s chin and wriggled closer, mirroring Steve’s curled up position; their knees

touched and Billy rested his forehead against Steve's, reaching out to entwine their fingers together.

"Thank you," Steve murmured, closing his eyes. Sleep was settling in again. Half-thoughts, lazy-thoughts flickered through his mind, of Nancy and Dustin and the others safe and sound in their own beds, of Billy standing outside his window, Billy bringing him water, Billy warm beside him.

"Course," Billy repeated, tilting his head to kiss Steve's cheek. Steve didn't hear him though, as he had already fallen fast asleep.